

Summary of Teaching & Learning Context

BA (Hons) Social Care Work -Year 3, Module: Social Policy
 (Group size -20)

Overview of the Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy contains two parts:

Summative - Students are asked to select an individual who has been inspirational in acting for social justice and conduct life history research on them. They must write 2,000-word review in response to the following prompts:

- Introduce the life history; explain why this person was selected; what is the significance in relation to social policy, social justice and social change?
- How was the persons life shaped by social policy? Think about issues such as class, race, gender, sexual orientation, the socio political and historical context.
- How did this person in turn shape progressive social policy for justice and change? Think about their contribution to service provision, campaigning, advocacy, changing policy or legislation.
- What have you learned from this life history research? Think about the role of social policy in your own life story and reflect on the impact one person can make for social justice and change.

Formative - Additionally students are asked to engage with each other in tutorial class time to share the life histories they chose, explain what they learned and the impact it may have on their own life stories while linking this to the role of social policy. Tutorial discussion around student contribution is facilitated to draw out deeper connections across the life stories and making connections to lecture content.

Rationale for why you use this assessment

Social policy is traditionally taught and read as a conceptual and theoretical subject. Traditional assessment for social policy is an academic essay. I wanted to use a more innovate assessment strategy that would encourage students to engage with social policy as a real-world issue. The use of life history offers an interesting and creative way to engage students with social policy and motivate them to develop a personal practice ideology around social change and the political potential of their practice.

Perceived impact on student engagement and their learning

The assessment strategy engages students in multiple ways including enhancing learner connections with:

- choice and voice’ in both the selection of the person they wish to study as well as an opportunity to express visions for social justice and change in areas they are passionate about. The assessment provides opportunity to celebrate difference and diversity.

- understanding their own biography, the socio – political context of their lives and professional practice and anticipating the possibility that they too can help work for broader social justice and social change that ‘another world is possible’. This connects with adult education theory that recognises the importance of students life experiences.
- better understanding social policy and its application to our everyday lives as well as how we can influence it.

Summary of assessment rubric being used to assess student work

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
Choice and suitability of the selected life history	10%
Analysis of the influence of social policy on life history	30%
Analysis of the influence of personal ideology and activism in changing social policy	30%
Personal reflection on assessment learning and the intersections between life history, social policy and social change	20%
Academic writing – spelling, grammar, sentence construction, referencing, structure and flow	10%

Method of student feedback and rationale

The student receives a feedback sheet with marks as well as comments for each section of the marking criteria. Written comments are provided through out the assignment script using the Moodle feedback facility. Further verbal feedback and debriefing happens through in class tutorial discussions.

Any challenges experienced and any advice for overcoming them?

There are no serious challenges for students or staff in this type of assessment. Students can need a little bit of scaffolding initially in the selection of a suitable life history. Students should be encouraged to join their local public library to access suitable memoirs, biographies or autobiographies.

Relevant Resources

Hoar, M. et al (1994). Life Histories and Learning - Language, the Self and Education, Centre for Continuing Education: Sussex, Available at: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED377356>

Lewis, D. (2008). Using Life Histories in Social Policy Research, *Journal of Social Policy* , Volume 37 , Issue 4 , pp. 559 – 578. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047279408002213>

Sharma, D and Barron, A. (ND) *Methods for Change: Life Histories*, Manchester University, <http://aspect.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/3.-Lif-his-Divya-Sharma-A4-Guide-3.pdf>

